

Message Text

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13

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 AID-20 IGA-02 OPIC-12 SCEM-02

INT-08 RSR-01 /146 W

----- 002552

R 080932 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6730

AMEMBASSY DACCA

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE RANGOON 1064

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENGR, IN, BD, BM

SUBJECT: OFFSHORE OIL EXPLORATION - TERRITORIAL WATERS IN
BAY OF BENGAL

REF: DACCA 1880

1. SEVENTEEN BLOCKS OF BURMA'S OFFSHORE AREAS (PARA 5 REFTTEL)
DEFINITELY INCLUDES ENTIRE ARAKANCOASTAL WATERS. EMBASSY
OFFICERS WERE SHOWN MAP OF BURMESE COASTLINE AT TIME NEW OIL
POLICY PROCEDURES WERE FIRST EXPLAINED BY GUB OFFICIALS. THIS
MAP CLEARLY INDICATED THAT OFFSHORE BLOCKS BEGAN WITH EXTENSION
OF NAF RIVER ALONG LINE THAT PROJECTED INTO BAY OF BENGAL IN
SSW DIRECTION. GUB OFFICIALS SAID THAT, WHILE RECOGNIZING 12- MILE
LIMIT AS DEFINITION OF ITS TERRITORIAL WATER, BURMA WOULD EX-
TEND BLOCKED- OFF AREAS OUT TO LIMIT OF CONTINENTAL SHELF. GEN-
ERALLY, HOWEVER, FIVE BLOCKS PARALLELED ARAKAN COAST SOUTHWARDS
TO COCO ISLANDS, THREE ACROSS THE ANDAMAN SEA TO INCLUDE GULF
OF MARTABAN AND THEN NINE SOUTHWARDS ALONG THE TENESSARIM
COAST. COCO ISLANDS AND SURROUNDING TRIANGULAR BLOCK WAS RE-
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SERVED FOR GUB' S OWN EXPLORATIONS.

2. AS SUGGESTED, AREA ALONG ARAKAN COAST HAS BEEN OPENED FOR OFFSHORE OIL EXPLORATION. WE UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, THAT BURMESE LIKELY WILL ASK COMPETING OIL FIRMS INITIALLY TO OFFER BIDS ON ONLY THREE OF SEVENTEEN BLOCKS AND, FURTHERMORE, THESE THREE WILL PROBABLY BE CONCENTRATED IN MOST PROMISING AREAS IN ANDAMAN SEA AND GULF OF MARTABAN. HOWEVER, OTHER AREAS MIGHT BE CONSIDERED FIRST IF THEY PROVE MORE PROMISING THAN NOW BELIEVED. WE UNDERSTAND THAT BURMESE WILL BEGIN TO INTERVIEW REPRESENTATIVES OF SOME 35 OIL FIRMS AT THE RATE OF 2-3 PER WEEK STARTING MID- MAY. NO DECISION ON APPLICATIONS IS EXPECTED FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS.

3. WE ALSO INTERESTED IN RECEIVING COPY OF MAP PRODUCED BY GOI AND PARTICULARLY ONE USED BY US FIRM CALARCAN CITED REFTEL. SHOULD COPY OF MAP SHOWING SEVENTEEN BLOCKS BORDERING BURMESE COAST BECOME AVAILABLE, WE WILL FORWARD IT TO ADDRESSEES.
MARTIN

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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